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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE APARTHEID STRUGGLE

ACCOUNTS of the background of the Boer War stress the almost unique way of life the Afrikaners had built for themselves since the Dutch first settled the Capetown area of South Africa in the middle of the seventeenth century. Their communities were predominantly rural, narrowly but strongly religious and highly patriarchal in character. Over a century ago, in reaction to the British freeing of the slaves, the Boers "trekked" miles to the north to found their own three independent republics. This cherished isolation was shattered at the turn of the last century by the Boer War and the subsequent formation of the British Union of South Africa. Isolation had to give way before the forces of modern imperialism.

Since that time the Afrikaners have sought to build up their political strength within the Union of South Africa itself. Their efforts led to the victory of the Nationalist party in 1948, which since then has been trying to turn the clock back. This is the regime which instituted a positive program of *Apartheid,* or rigid racial separation, removed many of the Bantus from the South African cities and confined them to special reservations. The Nationalists at present do enjoy an overwhelming majority support in the South African Parliament. But the Nationalists, and the Afrikaners, have even less chance of withstanding the march of African nationalism today than their forebears once had of stemming the tide of British imperialism.

What of the interval that lies ahead? South Africa's ten million Negroes, and many of the million and a half "coloreds" of mixed blood, are poorly educated, poorly organized and hardly ready for a full-fledged test of strength. Their chief reliance has to be on economic weapons, for they represent the bulk of the labor force in the farming and mining industries.

The moderate African Nationalist Congress and the new and more aggressive Pan-African Congress, which inspired the "anti-pass" campaign, are being outlawed. Hundreds of Negro leaders and a number of their white sympathizers have been jailed. Public meetings have been banned. Police have instructions to keep the native peoples in abjection; in the Capetown area they have taken to clubbing the defenseless natives on a wide scale. For the moment, the Nationalist forces are still firmly in the saddle, despite the wave of native feeling arising from the Sharpeville massacre.

IN THEIR efforts to maintain their own brand of economy, based on subject native peoples, the Nationalists of South Africa are greatly helped by the Union's geographical position. They appear to be effectively sealed off from those peoples who have recently achieved, or are about to achieve, independence by a band of other British colonies and then by Angola and Mozambique, two large Portuguese colonies where the natives have likewise been kept in strict tutelage and subservience. The Nationalists therefore still possess many advantages.

But the Union of South Africa can hardly expect to conduct its affairs as if it were all alone in the world. Its autonomy within the British Commonwealth is not absolute; the May 3 meeting in London of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers will not be able to avoid the *Apartheid* question altogether, at the very least in private conversations. Meanwhile, the U.N. Security Council, with Britain and France abstaining, has voted to deplore the Union's racial policies and to dispatch Dag Hammerskold to consult with the South African Government about upholding the U.N. Charter on Human Rights.

Prime Minister Verwoerd has an answer for the pressure from the other members of the British

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Commonwealth. He has already announced a referendum looking toward an independent republic. The Afrikaners' hope of conducting things in their own way as a people apart lives on. But their own political independence would provide a thin bulwark against the forces swirling around them.

Despite the determination of the South African authorities to remove the native leaders from the scene and extend the activities of the military and the police, they are already confronted by severe internal limitations. Observers do not believe that the native pass-book system, now temporarily suspended, can be reimposed without incurring major disorders. Work stoppage is widespread and causing big losses to the African economy. It is reported that large numbers of natives have strolled through the streets of Johannesburg after dark, the first time in this century that an effective curfew has not been imposed upon them.

The nature of the eventual outcome is unmistakable. The only question is whether the inevitable transition will be worked out amicably or imposed after much more blood has been shed.

MR. KHRUSHCHEV AND THE PRIEST-MAYOR

THE AFFAIR of the priest-mayor of Dijon and Mr. Khrushchev is interesting, tangled and, above all, peculiarly and particularly French.

The priest-mayor of Dijon is Canon Felix Kir. Now eighty-four years old, he was prominent in the Resistance during World War II and today serves not only as Mayor of Dijon but as a member of the French National Assembly. Canon Kir won election under the Independent party label, and he calls himself the most independent of the Independents—an effort at self-description with which there is reported to be no argument in France. Canon Kir has pronounced political views, many of which his Bishop is said to find embarrassing; the Canon, for example, takes Premier Khrushchev's "peaceful benevolence" quite seriously and wants an end to the cold war in favor of a common stand against what he calls "the yellow peril."

When the Khrushchev visit to France was planned, Canon Kir wanted the Russian premier to visit Dijon, and he was prepared to give him a hearty official welcome. From the first, however, the Church in France followed a strict, almost ostentatious, policy of non-involvement with the Khrushchev visit. It may well be necessary for statesmen to negotiate with the head of the U.S.S.R., the attitude of the French Bishops seems to have been, but Nikita Khrushchev remains a symbol of Communist tyranny, and Church leaders therefore pointedly avoided any public welcomes lest their presence be interpreted as lack of concern for persecuted believers behind the Iron Curtain.

It was in this context that Canon Kir prepared to welcome Mr. Khrushchev as the leader of a "crusade for world peace." And it is here that Americans encounter a situation foreign to their own experience and practice. Was Canon Kir welcoming the Russian premier in his civil capacity as Mayor of Dijon or as a well-known Catholic priest subject to ecclesiastical discipline? Which hat was the Canon to be wearing on that day, or was it possible to distinguish between them?

Canon Kir's Bishop clearly arrived at his own answer to these questions. The Canon was ordered not to welcome Mr. Khrushchev, and the Russian premier was greeted instead by the Deputy Mayor of Dijon. But this solution in turn caused disquiet in the United States, with some Americans calling the Bishop's decision a flagrant example of interference with the State by the Church. Do Catholic civil servants owe obedience to ecclesiastical superiors in such matters, they want to know, and would a Catholic President, for example, meet Mr. Khrushchev if he were told not to do so by Church authorities? Asked this question in Wisconsin, Senator Kennedy replied rather impatiently that he would of course meet the Russian leader, and perhaps his reply will settle the matter, at least for the time being. But the chances are that it will not, if only because there is in this country no parallel to the situation at Dijon.

In the early days of the Republic there was at least one priest in the House of Representatives, but these days it is taken for granted that priests do not run for public office. In one sense, of course, this is unfair; there are Protestant ministers in Congress, and priests are citizens as well as anyone else. But the tradition of clerical non-involvement in politics is strong, and we know of no American Catholic who would have it otherwise, even though it may deprive Senator Kennedy of some good samples of political independence by priest as well as lay officeholders.

If priests were going to hold political office in this country, though, it would seem that more attempt would have to be made to distinguish between priest as priest and priest as officeholder than was done in the case of Canon Kir in France, even though this particular case admittedly posed special problems. Priests are subject to ecclesiastical discipline in a way that other Catholics are not, and if

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they are to hold public office, this decision in turn would seem to demand a hands-off policy by their superiors on the prudential political decisions they must make. Thus whatever one may think of a priest's judgment in any particular case (and we are not inclined to rate Canon Kir's very highly), the fact remains that in the exercise of his political office he should not be subject to ecclesiastical discipline of the type associated with his exercise of his priestly office. If it is impossible for the two offices to be kept separate—as Canon Kir seems to have found it impossible—it would appear that ecclesiastical discipline should bar his running for office in the first place rather than face a situation like this after he has won it. There is, obviously, much to be said for the American solution to this problem.

A RAY OF HOPE

THE WORLD has moved a step or two closer to salvation from the Bombs. Undoubtedly future disarmament conferences will bring a great deal of jockeying for propaganda advantages, a great many false starts and stops, a great tumult of charges and countercharges. But it is at least probable that some progress will be made in slowing the nuclear arms race. This is little enough to be thankful for, but it is something; and it is something which the madness of recent years—up to and including this very minute—gives us no right to expect.

Even now, as representatives of the West and the Soviet Union play their chess game for the prize of world opinion, both sides seem much less concerned with nuclear disarmament itself than they are with appearing to be concerned with nuclear disarmament. Editorialists and commentators in many "conservative" papers have lately taken to complaining about this fact: that United States policies are being decided not by ourselves but by our fears of the opinions of others. And the policy they have in mind is mainly that on nuclear disarmament and testing.

There is something to this argument, we think, but not much. Obviously, the United States should not be pressured into disadvantageous moves in an unprincipled yielding to the desires of other nations, but such an observation introduces an altogether new set of terms. The kind of world opinion which is pressing the U.S. to reconsider its nuclear policy position arises not from national or ideological grounds but from the universal human qualities of fear and hope. Furthermore, it presses the Soviet Union, from within and without, in precisely the same direction. If the present hopeful developments in the disarmament negotiations are due chiefly to Soviet and Western desires to appear peace-loving in the eyes of the world, why then, so much the better for these desires.

Conceding the unremarkable fact that the Soviets are interested in securing propaganda and every other sort of advantage for themselves, it is nevertheless true that they have moved a long way towards accepting the West's own disarmament proposals. The latest Soviet offer—an agreement to ban all large-scale nuclear tests and a moratorium, pending further research, on presently undetectable explosions—represents a sizable step away from their previous position and toward the West's.

The objections which have been raised against this plan are not very convincing. It is argued, in the first place, that the Soviet Union is not sincerely interested in peace but only in the internal and propaganda advantages that disarmament would bring. This complaint is irrelevant to the achievement of disarmament as a good, however selfish the motives for seeking it may be. The prediction that the U.S.S.R. will never agree to adequate inspection is only that, a prediction, and there is no risk in putting the matter to a test.

A more cogent objection is that the moratorium on small-scale tests might be violated by the Soviets, who would thus be able to refine their smaller weapons while the West's nuclear arsenal was "frozen." It is true that this might happen. But there are a number of considerations here. First, it seems at least unlikely that the U.S.S.R. would take the risk of being caught by the world in such a violation. Second, even if the Soviets did try to continue the development of their tactical nuclear weapons, how much difference would this make? The West's security does not and will not depend on these tactical weapons; if a deterrent exists, it lies in the stockpiles of super-bombs. Anyway, to think that "small" bombs could ever be used without involving the world in a "big bomb" holocaust seems to us a legalistic impossibility. The terminology itself—classing the nineteen-kiloton bomb as "small"—seems to demonstrate the unreality which has brought the world to its present desperate danger. Such "small" bombs are like the one which killed a hundred and fifty thousand at Hiroshima.

The Soviet proposal undoubtedly entails some risks, but these are immediately and vastly outweighed by the risks of continuing the nuclear arms race. What we are talking about, after all, is nothing more or less than the survival or extinction of man as we know him.

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THE CASE OF MAGAZINE X

THERE IS a mystery in the Catholic press. It concerns a magazine which allegedly exists, a magazine to which Father Richard Ginder, a syndicated columnist in the Catholic press, refers in knowing, even familiar, terms. The question is, "What is the name of the magazine?"

Our own speculation began when some friends of The Commonweal asked for our assistance in identifying the magazine which Father Ginder discussed without naming in one of his columns. Presuming upon our knowledge of the Catholic press, we rashly committed ourselves to identifying the magazine as soon as we learned what Father Ginder said about it. Well, we've not entirely given up but after some weeks we still have no answer.

With the faint hope that others may succeed where we have failed, we offer the clues that Father Ginder provided. The title of the particular column which contains the entire mystery is entitled "Leftism in the Church." (On the basis of our experiences with other mystery writers, we suspect the title itself is a red herring, but that's only a suspicion.) Father Ginder devotes the first half of his column to a discussion of "relativism" as the established system of thought in secular universities.

There are sufficient lacunae in his thought to make the hasty reader uncertain of Father Ginder's over-all intention. In the second half of the column, however, the mystery begins to take shape. There are, it appears, Catholics who use catchwords such as "pluralistic" and "dialogue." Since the editors of this magazine have privately deplored the poverty of imagination which prevents them from finding suitable synonyms for these useful terms, they felt Father Ginder might include them among such Catholics, and that the mystery might be nearing easy solution.

But no, it was a false clue. The Catholics Father Ginder referred to thought "dialogue" meant that "we are to read articles and hear speeches knocking our Church" and that "pluralism" meant that "we should soft-pedal our apostolate and leave our neighbor to live and die in his error." Again our limitations were exposed, for we were forced to admit that we don't even *know* Catholics who would define "dialogue" and "pluralism" in such a fashion.

Those false clues, clearly designed to throw one off the track, were followed by hard, substantial evidence concerning Magazine X. Father Ginder wrote: "Take one magazine, for instance, that has acquired immense prestige through careful editing. In its early days, it published Chesterton, Belloc, Dimnet, Cram and Joergensen; Bishops Shahan and James Hugh Ryan, Cardinal von Galen, Maynard, Martindale, and Lynn Thorndike; Friedrich Funder, Agnes Repplier, Shane Leslie, Padraic Colum, and tens of others equally distinguished. For ten or eleven years it was the light of the Catholic Church in America."

When we read the list of the contributors and the complimentary comments about the magazine, we thought—such is the vanity of editors—that the mystery was cleared up. The magazine, of course, was The Commonweal. It *had* acquired prestige early and these people *had* contributed. But—so cleverly were we misled—it was just when we were most certain that we were most wrong. For Father Ginder went on to say: "Then one day it came out in support of the Reds in Spain. The rest of the Catholic press was scandalized. There was an intramural squabble on the magazine, a new editor took over, and behold! the first 'liberal' periodical among Catholics—consistently, predictably out of step with the majority of the Catholic Press on almost every issue."

In fact, many of the early contributors to The Commonweal continued to publish in the magazine after the change of editors. Even Michael Williams, the founder and previous editor, continued to write for the magazine. Father Ginder, of course, only implied lack of continuity; he did not assert it as fact. What throws The Commonweal completely out of the race as Magazine X, however, is the fact that Magazine X came out for the Communists in Spain. After the change in its staff The Commonweal stated its developed position in a long editorial. Among other things, it said: "To be strongly partisan concerning the Spanish Civil War is indeed to aggravate a current intellectual disease: the conviction that we are going to be forced to choose between fascism and Communism. This is a dangerous disease; sufferers from it are blinded by it to the truth that both systems are anti-Christian and secularist." As a commentator on the Catholic Press, Father Ginder is, naturally, as familiar with the stand of The Commonweal as he is with that of Magazine X.

The identity of Magazine X continues to elude us. One could always be unsporting and ask Father Ginder for the answer. But we will leave that easy solution to others. It is probable, we are coming to believe, that in reality there is no magazine X; that, in the tradition of the ironic humorist, Father Ginder made it all up; that he is merely having a gigantic leg pull at the expense of his devoted readers.

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The Meaning of Tibet

Tibet is of immense strategic importance, both from a political and a military point of view

by WALLACE LIU

THE LHASA UPRISING of March 10, 1959, known to the free world as the Tibetan Revolt against the Red Chinese rulers, seemed to have come to an end with the successful escape of the Dalai Lama, the God King of Tibet, into India. While it lasted, however, and for some time afterward, it held the attention of the world.

Many Westerners placed the Lhasa Uprising with the Hungarian Revolt of 1956, citing it as proof that freedom-loving people will never accept Communist tyranny. Others, remembering that the Tibetans are among the most religious peoples in the world, expressed the belief that they will reject atheistic Communism as oil repels water. A third group, the most optimistic of all, said that the high, treacherous mountains are especially favorable for guerrilla warfare, and that the rugged Khamba warriors, capable of living for months on *tsamba* and snow water, would keep on fighting for years and make the Red rule unprofitable.

Each of these opinions contained a grain of truth, but they showed a complete lack of understanding of the real situation in Tibet.

The uprisings in Lhasa and Budapest had one thing in common, a revolt against foreign occupation, but they were entirely different in nature. The Tibetan movement was led by a declining privileged class, the nobles, landlords and priests, while in Hungary the rebels were young students, intellectuals, workers and soldiers, many of whom were themselves Communists. The Tibetans had never known political freedom or economic betterment, the things for which the Hungarians were struggling.

Politically, Tibet was the only country in the world that was still under the theocratic rule. The highest ruler was the Dalai Lama, the God King. Sixty-five percent of the government employees were monks, and the rest came from the three hundred noble families of Tibet. Class distinctions were very sharp, and the only chance for a poor man's son to get an education and climb the social scale was to join the Lamaistic order. A monk was respected by the people and addressed by the title of *kusho,* as if he were a member of the nobility. In nearly every family, at least one of the sons was dedicated to the lamasery. Out of the 1,200,000 inhabitants of Tibet, 125,000 were Lama monks.

Economically, fifty-four percent of the population were farmers. Among them only three per cent owned their land, and their holdings amounted to less than two per cent of the cultivated soil. All the rest of the farming land belonged either to the nobles or to the monasteries. In order to prevent the family land from being broken up, many noble families practiced polyandry. Thus a feudal system based on land ownership was firmly established. The common people lived like serfs, in poverty, ignorance and filth.

THE RELIGION of Tibet is Lamaism, a mixture of Mahayana Buddhism and the native Shamanism. Lamaism was dominated by the old so-called "Red Cap" sect until the time of the Ming Dynasty, when a Mongol named Tsangkapa led a reform movement and founded a new sect, the "Yellow Caps," which forbade the practice of black magic and the marriage of lamas. Tsangkapa died in 1478, and his two disciples, Dali Lama and Panchen Erdeni, became the spiritual leaders of Tibet.

The Tibetans believe that when either one of these leaders dies, his spirit roams at will and reappears in the person of a child born either at the moment of his death or some time later. In searching for such reincarnation, the grand lamas would pray for guidance and consult the state oracle. The search might take years of time and thousands of miles of travel. The chosen candidates were confronted with an array of articles, one or two of which had been used by the

Mr. Liu, who taught at various universities in China, escaped from the country after the Communist victory and is now living in the U.S.

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deceased. The one who picked these out, and passed other tests as well, would become the successor.

The present Dalai Lama, the fourteenth in the line of reincarnation, and the present Panchen Erdeni, the tenth, were both chosen in this way. Dalai is supposed to be the political leader, and Panchen the spiritual, but in fact they rule different areas. The Dalai Lama rules the comparatively wealthy region, known as Chien-tsang, or Front Tibet, with his capital at Lhasa, while Panchen Erdeni, from his capital Shigatze, controls the barren territory known as Hou-tsang, or Back Tibet. For generations these two rulers have been at odds over matters of power and religious politics. The Chinese government, whether Manchu, Nationalist, or Communist, has always supported one against the other and played the game of "divide and rule."

The present Panchen Erdeni was originally a poor Tibetan peasant boy in the Chinese province of Chinghai, and was identified as the reincarnation of 1943. He was refused entry into Tibet by the Lhasa government, and had to be officially installed in Chinghai in August, 1949. When the Chinese Communist army took over Chinghai a month later, they immediately took possession of the child living Buddha and surrounded him with Communist agents.

On October 17, 1950, the Reds fought a fierce battle with Tibetan forces at Chamdo in Sikong Province. In a single day, seven "depon" (equivalent to a regiment in a modern army) of the Tibetan national army were completely annihilated, and two more battered beyond recognition. The Dalai Lama was forced into exile for a brief period and had to come to terms with Peking. The result was the seventeen-article agreement of May 23, 1951, which put Tibet under undisputed Communist rule and guaranteed the religious freedom and political status of the Dalai Lama. It also required, however, the restoration of Panchen Erdeni to his traditional capital of Shigatze, where he has been used brilliantly by his Communist masters.

In Lhasa before the uprising prayer flags still flew, Buddha's pictures and statues outnumbered those of Mao Tse-tung, and silver coins, forbidden in China, were still in common use. Land reform had not been carried out, and landlords were still allowed to collect rent. Rifles and pistols were sold freely in the market place. Shigatze presented a different picture. Mao's pictures were everywhere, and red-scarved Tibetan youths were seen all over the city, singing Communist songs and shouting propaganda slogans. Panchen Erdeni personally sponsored the first company of Tibetan Communist Vanguards. His mother and sister were leaders in the Tibetan Women's Patriotic Auxiliary.

EARLY in 1959 the ruling class of Tibet, monks and nobles, realized that they were losing ground. Three hundred leaders from different parts of Tibet were able to gather in Lhasa late in February, disguised as pilgrims to the yearly festival. Meeting at Norbu Linka, the headquarters of the Tibetan local government, they proclaimed a revolution against the Red tyrants. A People's Conference was created, and mounted messengers rode out from Lhasa to all parts of Tibet to call for an uprising.

By March 10, twenty thousand fighting men were assembled in the Lhasa area, ready for action, and the Dalai Lama was advised to leave for the Indian border. He slipped away with an entourage of almost a hundred, including his mother and brothers, and traversed the perilous passes of the Himalayas, traveling by night and hiding by day.

On March 19 the Tibetans, with the Dalai Lama at a safe distance, launched an all-out attack on the Communists. Bridges were blown up, roads destroyed, and ammunition depots raided. The bloody battle raged for three days. When it was over fifteen thousand were dead, two-thirds of them Tibetan fighters. About five thousand Khambas escaped into the mountains.

Many people in the West comfort themselves with the thought that the Khamba warriors, who gave such a gallant account of themselves in this engagement, will carry on a stubborn guerrilla resistance for years, if necessary, until the Reds are driven out. Unfortunately, this is not true. The Khambas are people from the mountains of Southeast Tibet, where the land is unproductive and living is hard. They are usually tall, strong, and ill-tempered. Most Tibetans, as devoted Buddhists, are opposed to violence and killing. When fighting must be done they prefer to hire someone else to do it. Thus the Khambas have become professional soldiers in Tibet, noted for their bravery. Modern warfare, however, is not based on individual bravery, but on firepower and organization. Guerrilla warfare depends on effective intelligence work, political propaganda, and support from the populace. The Khambas have no advantage in any of the above factors, and they lack the motivation of fighting for a cause they believe in.

The people of Lhasa always regarded the Khambas as wild, lawless, and uncouth. Many Khambas lived on extortions from the herders on the plains, and were really no better than robber bands. When the Chinese Reds marched into Tibet in 1950 a group of Khambas guided them through the mountains to cut off the retreat of the Tibetan army from Chamdo. To rely on a handful of mercenary tribal chieftains to drive out a well-organized, internationally backed and thoroughly indoctrinated Communist invader is, unfortunately, simply a daydream.

Moreover, the Communists are not without support among the Tibetans. In the Lhasa Uprising about five hundred Tibetan youths were fighting on the Communist side, and several hundred more were acting as spies.

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Since 1952 the Reds had been recruiting boys from poor Tibetan families to attend their training schools for cadres. Three thousand youths had undergone this indoctrination and by this time many of them were full-fledged Party members.

Today, in a country which had been practically untouched by modern education, there are twenty-four Communist-operated schools with nearly 10,000 students. In 1958, Lhasa alone had 1,800 students in school, while Shigatze had 2,400, and the Communists plan to open fifty primary schools and three middle schools in Tibet in 1960.

Furthermore, according to information from behind the bamboo curtain, the Communist garrison in Tibet has been increased to 350,000 men, including a chemical warfare unit and three engineering units. That is nearly a ratio of one soldier to three Tibetan civilians. In addition, the Peking government began in 1956 a plan to relocate one million Chinese in Tibet. By the summer of 1958, three hundred thousand had moved in. In 1960 the one-million goal will be reached, and the Chinese in Tibet will outnumber the Tibetans. As soon as the first million immigrants are settled another million will be on the way.

And all over Tibet the Communists are busy with construction projects. They have completed six trunk highways: Sikong-Tibet (1,400 miles), Chinghai-Tibet (1,310 miles), Sinkiang-Tibet (730 miles), Heiho-Gartok (700 miles), Lhasa-Yatung (390 miles), and Gartok-Pulantsung (158 miles). These roads are mainly for military purposes and cannot be justified on economic grounds. They have also built a number of airfields. The largest is at Gartok and is entirely military in nature. Guided missile bases have been secretly built in Northern Tibet. A large air force depot at Digarcha able to accommodate four hundred planes is only a few minutes by plane from Nepal. A secret report from Katmandu, Nepal, stated that the Chinese Reds have massed one hundred thousand troops along the Indian and Nepalese border.

Thousands of scientists and economic experts have been sent into Tibet to study the industrial and agricultural potentialities of the country. In 1956 the Institute of Geology in Peking sent 2500 students, equipped with the latest scientific instruments and led by professors and Russian experts. Their discoveries were very rewarding. Rich oil fields were discovered in the northwestern part of the country, and the deposits of boron found around the dead lake beds are reported to be the biggest in the world. Along the Chinghai-Tibetan highway, especially in the northern section, rich veins of iron were exposed. Coal and gold were also found.

In November, 1956, the 54th Geological Survey Team found uranium in the upper valley of the Salween River. According to the report, "The members of the survey team went wild with joy, jumping, shouting, and kissing the stones." When the good news reached Peking the reply came, "Congratulations, Comrades, on your glorious accomplishment. You have fully revealed the noble character and selfless spirit of the Communist party members. From now on the 54th Geological Survey Team will be honorably named the First Red Flag Geological Survey Team."

THE IMPORTANCE of Tibet lies in these discoveries of mineral resources, and, perhaps even more, in its military and political potentialities. Tibet offers the best base for the guided-missile warfare for the following reasons: First, missiles fired from a high altitude travel faster and more accurately than those from lower places. Second, the uniformity of the weather in Tibet is ideal for guided missile warfare. The high plateau in the northern part of the country is practically free from effects of rain and storms. Third, Tibet has never been accurately mapped by the West. In the remote mountains with their ancient forests missile bases and their military headquarters cannot be easily located and attacked.

The political significance of Tibet, finally, exceeds even the military value in the eyes of the Reds. In 1949 the Third Comintern in Moscow drew up a plan for the liberation of Asia, which was secretly circulated among the top members of the Chinese Red government.

Under this plan Red China was given the assignment of liberating India by way of Tibet and Pakistan by way of Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang). It is reliably learned that Red China has settled four hundred thousand young war veterans in an area in Southwest Sinkiang near Kashgar. They have been given land and animals, and are kept in top condition by constant drill. In case of trouble they will be ready to march into Pakistan.

Lenin once wrote, "The shortest route to Paris and London is through Peking and Delhi." We must not forget that the shortest route from Peking to Delhi is through Tibet. Should India go Communist, Africa would be in trouble. With Africa gone the Free World would be at bay, compelled to fight for survival.

The significance of the Tibetan revolt is, then, far greater than we think. It is, I believe, even more serious than the Budapest Uprising of 1956 and of more fundamental importance than the Berlin question. Ten years ago China and her six hundred million people fell into the hands of the Communists. Now Tibet has been swallowed up, and the further loss of India and her four hundred million would be disastrous. In the Free World's struggle against the rising tide of Communism in Asia, the Tibetan revolt is thus an ominous warning signal, and India is now the major ground. We ignore this warning at our peril.

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FROM THE SOUTH

NOWHERE in the United States is life changing more rapidly than in the South. The old South, the last bastion of American regionalism, is now dying. One hopes that the South reborn will not be a mere carbon-copy of the rest of the country. We will all be richer if the particular charm and grace which have characterized this section of the nation resist the homogenization which seems today to be spreading like a blight over the land. At the same time, it is clear, not every death calls for tears, and some of the habits of mind, irrational prejudices and hallowed "customs" which are passing in the South should go happily unmourned. There will come a day when even the Southern diehards will see that point. But until it comes, the South that is dying seems destined to suffer anguish of spirit and all the pains of a lingering death.

The Southern crisis, of course, is centered on the segregation question and the hopeless battle to stem the tide of racial equality that is engulfing the world. The segregationist's battle has been lost, but how long will it take, how much heartache and even violence must be suffered, until he grants the victory?

The rabid segregationist screams that the "new Negro" is primarily interested in interracial marriage. That is nonsense. What the "new Negro" is interested in is civic equality. While he is quite willing to hold up his end of the civic contract, paying taxes and obeying laws, he also wants the rights and privileges that go with American citizenship.

Ideally, serious dialogue between the "new Negro" and the white South should have taken place some years ago. But there was a failure of leadership. While individual clergymen frequently spoke out bravely and even heroically, it must be admitted that the churches failed to assume the leadership that should have been theirs when the present crisis was brewing. By and large the press failed, too, though again there were noble exceptions. The politicians failed. The educators failed. And now the time for dialogue seems to have passed. Negro leadership has turned to sit-downs, to pressure and boycott and economic warfare. The moral question which everyone avoided for so long is now being spelled out in the crudest economic terms.

Perhaps I have too utopian a view of the possibilities of civic dialogue, but it does seem to me that every recourse to the instruments of pressure represents a defeat for the ideal of democratic living. So I would say that with the present sit-downs and organized boycotts creating a real crisis in the South, the long list of failures must be lengthened to include a dismal failure of the democratic process. I say this because whatever the outcome of the present warfare, it will not prove which side is right, it will only prove which is stronger.

In this long catalogue of failures, none seems more poignant than that of the churches. At the headquarters level, most of the great church bodies have been strong and unequivocal in their statements and resolutions favoring interracial justice. But how much more difficult it is to put these precepts into practice than to pronounce them. In the concrete situation there are all the pressures of conformity and the demands for compromise push in relentlessly on the Southern pastor who is caught in the actual situation. In all probability, then, it was a failure of nerve rather than a defect in principle which made so many churchmen powerless to create the dialogue that should have made the present warfare unnecessary. And because we can all understand a failure of nerve, we sympathize with such men even while we regret that they failed.

On the other hand, religion has been a mighty force strengthening the Negro's resolve to claim his rights. There is a strong evangelical note to the great chorus of protest that has risen up from the "new Negro." At least in the South, the integrationist movement is not a secularist cause. Of course you hear charges that the hymn-singing and Bible-quoting connected with the movement are hypocritical facades. But I for one do not believe it. No one would deny that the old-time religion is meaningless to certain secularized Negro leaders. But the explosion in the ranks was set off by a genuine breakthrough of the Word.

Not that all the hymn-singers and Bible-quoters in the South are integrationists. The most adamant segregationist leaders are often found among the ill-educated ministry of fundamentalist sects carrying the message that God Himself is the greatest segregationist of them all, a message based on a literal reading of isolated passages from the Bible. For these people, as for so many simple religious people throughout history, whatever is of custom or tradition in the community is clearly of God. Again, one can understand and feel a certain sympathy for them, but, alas, their leadership has been banefully reactionary and even in terms of the temporal good of the South disastrous.

What has impressed me after even a very short visit to the South is that the present crisis, one way or another, is basically religious. Except by the most sophisticated, and perhaps by some of them too, the issue is seen not as a political problem essentially but as a *crise de conscience,* as the French say. And more is the pity that when it speaks at all, the religion native to this tragedy-scarred region speaks with two voices.

JOHN COGLEY.

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The uses and abuses
of the ubiquitous personality test

Taking Man's Measure

by JOHN P. SISK

IT MUST have occurred to more than one Sherlock Holmes fan that the great detective, with his "peculiar facility for deduction," would have made a superb psychometrician. Imagine the ease with which he would evaluate the 566 statements of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory or the 300 statements of the Guilford-Zimmerman Temperament Survey—if he did not find it possible to dispense altogether with such elementary equipment. It is conceivable that he would be able to reduce the classic ten Rorschach cards to one and end for all time the speculation about how to interpret reactions to it.

Holmes might do such things, that is, if he were not obliged first to subject himself to a battery of personality tests to qualify as a tester. For Holmes, according to Dr. Watson, was as deficient in human sympathy as he was preeminent in intelligence. He was also reticent about his family background, had an unemotional character, was disinclined to form new friendships, preferred his own company and was averse to women. He was, in fact, the sort of person that personality tests so often ferret out and warn employers against as a bad risk.

Not that this would have bothered Holmes; no company man to begin with, he could afford to be his eccentric and rather asocial self. But for most of us, who must come to terms with the organization, whether private or public, it is another matter. If we seek vocational advice, apply for a position in city, state or government service or in industry, even if we enter a seminary, the likely thing is that we will find ourselves pencil-in-hand staring at the familiar test booklet, which will advise us solemnly that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers, but which we will prudently treat as if there were.

If we are honest many of us will admit that, however we may grumble or criticize, there is something about having our personalities probed that we like. For some there is the excitement of being on trial with competing testees in a hazardous enterprise, for it is generally clear that one must pick his way among booby traps: "I am never happier than when alone"; "I like poetry"; "Sometimes I feel unusually cheerful without knowing why." And there are those who get a confessional thrill from tests: who don't mind at all admitting that the thought of making a speech terrifies them or that their sex life is far from satisfactory.

There are others who derive comfort from the thought of being committed to the competent hands of the experts, even of being important enough to merit such a concentration of professional attention. For them everything about a personality test suggests direction and clarity of purpose; to commit themselves to it is like committing oneself to a father who for all his stern implacability has one's best interests at heart.

And some of us like too—more than we care to admit—the ritual that testing is. To be accepted into the organization after having passed successfully through a battery of personality tests is equivalent to becoming a Mason or Knight of Columbus by way of initiating ceremonies: one has earned his way to fraternity in a manner sufficiently formalized to impress him with the value of what has happened.

NEVERTHELESS, most of us resent these tests more than we like them. We resent them because we fear that we will not measure up when it is not clear what we are expected to measure up to. We resent them not only because we feel that they invade our privacy but because they so blandly assume that we don't mind. For most of us believe, with Pope Pius XII, that "the content of the psyche is the exclusive property of the person himself."

And then no amount of homely, colloquial phrasing in a test, no amount of novelty and game-like devices, can hide from the testee the fact that he is in the hands of an impersonal scientific process. Although this awareness may, as I have said, involve incidental comfort it is more likely to arouse resentment against an activity that threatens to reduce him to data to be fed into a machine.

The person in us is further affronted, especially if the test is for a promotion, when the organization appears unwilling to decide on the basis of past achievement, as if one's record were suspected of being part of an elaborate disguise. The conviction that one has a right to be taken at face value, in terms of his overt

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display to the world, may be naive, but it dies hard in most of us, and a denial of this right is quite commonly felt to be a violation of human trust.

And we resent also—those of us who haven't become completely accustomed to it—what we take to be the organization's refusal to be satisfied with part of us. Like a neurotic lover who cannot imagine any safety short of complete possession of the loved one, the organization seems to be lusting after our inmost self.

Now it is obvious that many of these resentments and fears are exaggerated, misplaced, even in some instances pathologic. Personality testing is a development of psychology that has demonstrated its value as an adjunct to therapy and guidance work and in general as a means of helping people to understand themselves and live more effectively in society. It was inevitable that institutions and organizations that must absorb and manage large numbers of people should turn to the tester for aid. Indeed, it is hard to see how many of them could operate without him.

The personality tester deserves not only recognition for the good that he does but sympathy. In an activity the natural environment of which is the uncertain and the shifting, the impossible is expected of him, while he is forced to use tools and methods that make him an easy target. The tester, in fact, is in a wonderful position to suffer from the fear and hatred of science that in modern man is the underside of a childlike adulation of science as a fairy godmother.

Yet, there are good reasons for looking at the personality tester, especially when he functions not in the immediate interests of the individual but of the organization, with more than a little apprehension.

ANYONE who has had an occasion to study a number of tests will find it hard not to agree with William H. Whyte's *The Organization Man* that they tend to be conformity tests. Part of the reason lies with the practical necessities of large-scale testing: tests must standardized, so constructed that they can be understood by the lowest level of potential testees, easy to administer and easy to score. Even the validation of personality tests tends to make them conformity tests, for they must be validated not platonically against immutable norms but within the context of a society that tends to pass its characteristics and values on to its measurers.

For this reason it is a mistake to put all the blame on the testers, forgetting the extent to which the organization is itself the test-maker and evaluator. In theory the personality test is a means of servicing the organization by making available to it standards that are "objectively" outside it. But in practice the test easily becomes the organization's way of applying its own values to those who are or hope to become its members.

This is not only because of the organization's natural inclination to take itself as a constant, but because of the passion for prediction bred in it by its conservative tendency to minimize risk. Organizations, like individuals, incline to create for themselves an illusion of predictability. That is why it is not sufficient to criticize personality tests because they do not predict accurately, a fact which has lately been made incontrovertibly clear. They may not predict adequately, but they still perform the important function of helping the organization face the future with a measure of confidence, at the same time winnowing out some of the people who seem likely to disturb that confidence. What often needs to be criticized, then, is the extent to which personality tests have become habit-forming tranquilizers.

According to psychologists Berg and Pennington, an often-raised objection to paper-and-pencil personality tests is that "many people may lack insight to such a degree that they are unable to give accurate answers to the questions on most inventories." But a more important objection is almost the reverse of this: that many people of insight and intelligence find, or should find, a great number of the questions unanswerable. These tests allow the testee to choose between yes or no, true or false, to underline applicable statements, or, by means of a question mark or no answer at all, to indicate uncertainty, complete ignorance or the inapplicability of the question. No test provides a means of indicating that the question as put cannot be intelligently and honestly responded to by any of these means.

Such simplifications are, of course, inevitable given the need to standardize tests and make them easy to administer and score, and they may be harmless enough in clinical and guidance work. No doubt there are many disturbed, markedly maladjusted or disoriented subjects who stand in need of the assistance the psychological tester can give them, and who because of the hyperbolic nature of their states of mind are aware of no need to qualify their answers to such items as these:

I liked school.

I like movie love scenes.

Do you like working alone?

Do you find books more interesting than people?

In his unbuttoned social moments a man may allow himself categorical answers to such questions or statements, but when he is formally on trial and his answers become a matter of record for an anonymous evaluator he ought to resent the implication that he can speak his mind honestly with such crude instruments. And the instrument is not appreciably sharpened if the testee is asked only to choose between "mostly" true or "mostly" false. In fact, one wonders if the tester's implied low opinion of the average adult's ability to think precisely isn't based as much on necessity as on fact. Certainly his job would be immensely more complicated if he had to prepare his inventories for more sophisticated subjects.

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QUESTIONS or statements like the above are what make personality tests nightmares for imaginative and self-aware persons, who can only score well by being dishonest with the test and, what is worse, with themselves. What they help to breed is the sort of person—Erich Fromm calls him the marketing personality—who is willing to be whatever someone makes it worth his while to be. And they also make one wonder if Nietzsche could possibly have had personality tests in mind when he wrote: "Objections, evasions, joyous distrust, and love of irony are signs of health; everything absolute belongs to pathology."

Ironically, personality tests which have the aim of ending indecision and uncertainty can have the very opposite result. This is the paradox Henry A. Kissinger has called attention to: "the more intense the search for certainty by means of administrative devices, the greater is the inward uncertainty of the participants." Mr. Kissinger is concerned not with testing but with the paralyzing effect the committee and the called-in expert or intellectual can have on executives and policy-makers in a system that increasingly "stresses avoidance of risk rather than boldness of assumption." Nevertheless, he might very well have been talking about the paralyzing effect personality tests can have on those who must decide about the disposition of subordinates. In theory, of course, the test or battery of tests is only an aid to the decision-maker; but in practice it becomes only too easy for him not to decide at all—to let the test decide. The test is a wonderful way to avoid the moral and economic risks of interpersonal relations.

This is also true about purely personal decisions. The value of personality tests in counseling and guidance work is unquestionably great. Nevertheless, tests make it easy for the individual to pass all the responsibility for choosing a profession or vocation to a battery of tests, often perhaps in an instinctive effort to forestall the self-accusation of having chosen poorly. If the tests are good ones and wisely used the individual and society may be the gainers, but the individual is often the poorer for having entrusted himself unreservedly to the testing process. There is something to say for the old-fashioned, trial-and-error method of discovering one's place in life, particularly as David Riesman says it in his essay "The Found Generation." It is not that the waste, frustration and tragedy that are so often incidental to this method are good things, but that the untested personality was forced to do what every man must do if his life is to have meaning: confront his destiny as his own problem and his own responsibility.

The moral problem of personality testing is and will continue to be a thorny one. It arises not only from the intrusion of the psychologist into the depths of the personality, but from the fact that the testing situation involves a competition of disguises: the disguise of the testee's personality being countered by the disguised probing of the tester, who may not find what he is looking for unless he appears not to be looking for it. It is true that the disguises of the tester may have good, even noble, motives: the health and happiness of the individual, the correction of disastrous attitudes in the group, the more efficient functioning of an organization important to national economy or public welfare, or the advancement of knowledge. But the very worthiness of the cause is often the trouble, for it is easily made the justification for questionable forays against the rights of the individual.

PERHAPS nothing in the literature of psychological testing disturbs the layman more than his suspicion that behind the personality tests is an abstract and mechanistic concept of man: a conviction that the human personality is as fit an object for scientific examination and ultimate control as is nature itself; a conviction that however mysterious the personality is now it will finally yield up all its mysteries and lend itself to complete empirical analysis.

This suspicion, it must be admitted, is often founded on ignorance and the fear not so much of testers as of having to face up to facts about oneself that one cannot imagine himself living with. Still, there is some reason for the suspicion. The very act of trying to measure the human personality tends to induce the hope of complete success; and tends also to the definition of personality that gives substance to that hope. More than one psychometrician must dream of "a complete individual personality picture, using all pieces of objective evidence as one would pieces of a jigsaw puzzle," as a contributor to *Developments in the Rorschach Technique* (Vol. II) puts it. What the layman wonders is the extent to which the "complete personality picture" implies complete control of personality—by experts acting, of course, in the interests of a saner and more harmonious society. Such a complete picture is possible only if a rather modest definition of the human person turns out to be correct.

At this point one might remember D. H. Lawrence's angry response to the rationalism of Benjamin Franklin: ". . . my soul is a dark forest . . . my known self will never be more than a little clearing in the forest." Franklin and many psychometricians are, like Sherlock Holmes, haters of the dark forest of the human personality who aspire to reduce its mystery to, as Dr. Watson liked to say, "simplicity itself." But Lawrence can give only temporary comfort. The dilemma of our times—indeed, of post-Cartesian times—is that for so many there seems to be no alternative to choosing between the "dark forest," in which they may be lost, and the "simplicity itself," in which their humanity will be seriously reduced. Since most of us are not heroes it is not odd that we try to adapt ourselves—with some misgivings—to simplicity and the tester.

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Protestant Insights Today

by CHARLES STINSON

IN HIS recent study *Protestant Thought from Rousseau to Ritschl,* Karl Barth commented, "Perhaps the placing of philosophy and theology beside each other is a matter which after all cannot be spoken of without irony—and from the theological side, too!" This is Barth's thought as he takes a moment out from his considerations of Kant to brood over the meaning of the world of Protestant thought to which he has given his life, that "theological side, too!"

Now we in the Church have not, of course, given our lives to that world. Nevertheless, we must all finally end by starting to think about it almost as seriously as its own inhabitants do.

The eminent Jesuit Father Gustave Weigel has made this quite clear in his *Survey of Protestant Theology in Our Day* and again in his remarkable—indeed, for this country, almost epoch-making—article "Protestant Theology as a Catholic Concern."

With Father Weigel, and *Humani Generis,* we "take it for granted" that cultivated Catholics must know a great deal about the thought of other Christian intellectuals—especially the work of the brilliant Barth, of Tillich, Nygren, Brunner, the Niebuhrs, Aulén, Cullmann, Bultmann, the Baillies, Bennett and all the other recent and contemporary writers on what has been called the New Protestantism.

There are, however, certain prerequisites to such an effort. In order to *understand* (as opposed to simply knowing about) contemporary Protestant theology, we must frankly face its achievements and candidly recognize them as such. We cannot do this unless we contrive to view Protestant achievements through Protestant eyes while constantly seeing our Protestant view through Catholic eyes. We must, in short, don a pair of ecumenical bi-focals. If we do not, Protestant theology today will merely distort and seem like an enormous, an architectonic, proliferation of ever more ingenious errors. And we shall have, of course, already quit theology to return—once again—to the barren soil of worn-out polemics.

Secondly, we must remember that creative Protestant thought has, in the strict sense, no past. It has, rather, a series of yesterdays and it can be held to account for none of them. It is, as Father Weigel says, both cleanly disjunctive and "fluid." Save for the remnant of intellectual fundamentalism, creative Protestant thought, whether Liberal, Neo-orthodox or "apocalyptic," is always a vital monument to a moment.

Thirdly, we must, whatever else we may do, *not* follow Bossuet and assume that Protestant thought sets itself the same goals as does thought within the Church. From this false premise, we move on only too smoothly to the satisfying conclusion that this fluid, this momentary quality of Protestant thought is a weakness in, or at least an embarrassment to, the Protestant mind. And, of course, we could not be in greater error. The truly Protestant mind regards the eternal fluidity of its thought as simply a vital openness to the ceaseless process of becoming which is life itself. In his intriguing *The Protestant Era,* Tillich draws a profound distinction between the historically conditioned evangelical element in Protestantism (a hyper-Augustinianism) and the true Protestant principle which is, of course, private judgment.

If we keep these considerations in mind, we will, I think, be making a fairly successful approach to that vantage point from which Protestant thinkers view their own achievements.

THIS PROTESTANT moment, Neo-orthodoxy, is, in a very real sense, then, the only Protestant moment we can discuss. The liberal past can be viewed only negatively from the present, and the next creative moment remains as unknown as the future secular *Weltanschauung* which will form it.

Thanks to the untiring efforts of the Luce organization, everyone literate enough to scan *Time's* sprightly little religion section has become at least vaguely familiar with the outlines of the history of the "new somber theology of spiritual crisis which takes sin seriously." Its rise, along with existentialism, from Barth's Rhineland rectory to Harvard is known to us all. It is one of the great success stories of our time. In comparison, the general acceptance given the Neo-Thomist revival seems rather cool.

Catholic critical interest in the movement began quite early in Europe. The celebrated Neo-Augustinian Jesuit Erich Pryzwara began it with his warmly eirenic review of *Römerbrief*—a review which amused Barth as much as it surprised and delighted him. ("Those,

Mr. Stinson, an interested observer of the current religious scene, with this article makes his first appearance in The Commonweal.

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like ourselves, who are moving in the world of the theology of the Reformation, for this very reason, ought not—and indeed do not—cast in the teeth of others that they are moving with conviction in the world of medieval theology.")

That same Catholic interest in Barth and in the other Neo-orthodox writers runs like a constant thread all through the twenties and thirties, in *Hochland,* in *Etudes,* in *Stimmen Der Zeit,* in *Vie Intellectuelle,* in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* and in many other learned periodicals.

The noted Swiss theologian Father Hans Urs von Balthasar has an excellent book on him, and a younger Swiss writer, Hans Kung, has suggested that Barth shares his theory of Justification with the Council of Trent. Whatever we might wonder about that marvel, we must note that Kung's work has managed to receive both Barth's interested approbation and a very friendly review in *Razón y Fé* by the Spanish Jesuit Juan Alfaro.

In the United States, Father Weigel has published his *Survey* and indicated a particular admiration for Tillich whose lucid, highly abstracted philosophical theology he calls "a real, organic Protestantism . . . total and intelligible." Father Weigel's work must be seen, of course, against the backdrop of Karl Adam's *Una Sancta,* Louis Bouyer's *Spirit and Forms of Protestantism,* John A. Hardon's *Christianity in Conflict,* Van Der Pol's *The Christian Dilemma,* George Tavard's *Catholic Approaches to Protestantism* and other constructive works.

Beyond the obvious pragmatic justification for this interest—the needs of a dawning eirenic era—there are several deep, purely speculative elements in Neo-orthodox thought itself which make it a peculiary rewarding Protestant moment to study, even were there no ecumenical movement to prompt us.

WHILE IT is impossible to detail here such a complex thought system, we may say, without distorting too much, that Neo-orthodoxy takes the sophisticated anti-rationalist philosophy of existence preceding essence and merges it with a profound grasp of the psychological myths aspect of Biblical religion, in order to produce varying mixtures of what Sidney Hook once called "reason and myth." The Neo-orthodox thinkers are thus able to accept both the unbelief of our age and the belief of the Christian community by metamorphosing them and then transcending them.

A "right wing," Barth, and the much more conservative Nygren and Aulén, show a predominance of the specifically Biblical elements over the philosophical; the "middle," Brunner, Niebuhr and the majority of the younger Americans, more or less balance them; on the "left," the philosophical considerably surpasses the Biblical in Tillich and, even further "left," in Bultmann, who takes the existential kernel of the New Testament out of the mythological husk of the first century in order to re-encase it in the mythology of the twentieth.

There are a number of fundamental insights in Neo-orthodox thought which help explain its admirable fertility. Foremost, perhaps, is its clear recognition of the essential ambiguity of all temporal religious existence both in itself and vis-à-vis the types of "infidelity" around it—and within it. This note is particularly strong in Reinhold Niebuhr who reveals in all his writings a most sensitive feeling for the universal, indestructible penetration of the City of God by the city of man, of piety by wordliness, of good by evil.

A second insight offered by these writers is their understanding and use of what they usually call the "super-historical." This derives from a grasp of the supra-temporal, psychological aspect of a given historical truth-event. Even the most Incarnational theology recognizes, in reflection, this aspect of the event, but only Neo-orthodoxy emphasizes and even exalts it. For the genuinely "modern" mind, the Cross may range anywhere from an isolated and even dubiously alleged happening to a fine subject for the Renaissance painters. But as a historic-redemptive kerygma we must realize that it is, for certain profound cultural reasons, nearly an impossibility for such minds. We must further admit that much of its *essential theological* content has been brought across to them by Neo-orthodox writers in psychological and symbolic terms. If the New Testament is closed to them as history, it may still be open as Wisdom.

Finally, the Neo-orthodox writers have, to an admirably keen degree, a sense for the inexpressible poignance of this world, "the casual, ugly attrition of time," as a profound novelist of our time has put it. Without this sense, all theology and all spiritual literature remains sterile—a compendium of correct syllogisms and appropriate footnotes, all at an awe-inspiring remove from its mysterious subject—theandric life.

These and other valuable insights—the paradoxical use of the *via negativa* and a shrewd social critique—are found, in varying degrees, in all the "senior" writers previously mentioned. In this country, among the rising group of Protestant intellectuals influenced by them are such as Alexander Miller, Nels Ferré, John Dillenberger, Joseph Haroutunian, Daniel Williams, the lively Lutherans Martin Marty and Jaroslav Pelikan. Dr. Pelikan's astonishing new book, *The Riddle of Roman Catholicism,* is an excellent view of Catholicism as it is seen by an informed, intelligent non-Catholic theologian.

We would, in sum, do well to try and capture some of these creative insights in our own thinking within the Church. "Not who says it," observes the prince of Scholastics, "but what is said."

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THERE ARE, of course, from the Catholic viewpoint certain major intrinsic faults in Neo-orthodox thought—subjectivism, voluntarism, and a bias against historicity. These are all so well known that we can be excused from rehearsing them here. We might only add that, like all Protestant thought, Neo-orthodoxy is subject to a powerful and relentless law of oscillation: its periodic extreme brilliance is achieved only by dramatic—and risky—exaggeration of its theses. Either the age "horizontalizes" and absorbs theology as with Ritschl, Schleiermacher and Harnack. Or, as with Kierkegaard, Barth and (to a lesser extent) Tillich, theology locates deftly and exploits ferally the typical foibles of the age in order to stress, to an admittedly striking but finally insupportable tension, the distinction between nature and grace, the world and "the utterly other."

Finally, some of its writers have not avoided that blunder that so many of us within the Church have committed. A sort of—shall we say?—confidence game with the world. We found secular humanist culture in a confused and discouraged moment and we could not resist the temptation to be rather pleased. Tillich assures us that the existential divine is "protected" by his involvement in "man's estrangement" from the "arrogance of having revelatory answers at his disposal." Unfortunately, the otherwise perceptive Reinhold Niebuhr has not been protected from talking at times to secularists in terms such as these: "We can only know that the twentieth century has refuted the dreams of the earlier centuries of the modern era in the most tragic terms, and that modern culture is immersed in pathetic confusions by reason of this refutation."

We can have an inkling of how disastrous this confidence really is only when we realize that, despite wars and rumors of wars, nothing has actually changed between Christians and the "world." It remains obvious to critical and unbelieving eyes that, as Henri de Lubac puts it, prudently enough, "in spite of every possible effort of adaptation, the action of the Church remains far from effective. Far from making a perpetual advance, she goes back. Even where she is in apparent control and her influence is recognized and encouraged, she does not bring about the reign of the Gospel and the social order is not transformed according to her principles."

A supernal confidence, then, among the "pathetic confusions" of our secular fellow citizens is not only a lapse in charity; it is a theology of delusion. When Neo-orthodoxy was made, some months ago, the subject of a startlingly vehement and widely discussed attack by a young Protestant intellectual writing in a prominent secular journal, significantly one of the points he scored the hardest was just this confidence. It should be a lesson both to the Neo-orthodox and for those of us in the Church.

Since, however, its faults and critics notwithstanding, the Neo-orthodox moment in the Protestant mind shows every sign of continuing for some time yet in full vitality, we might be wise to do some thinking about it vis-à-vis the Church herself.

The pastoral question is simple. On sacramental levels, the life of the Church continues, deep, divinely vivified from age to age and profoundly unaffected by the speculations of any innovator, no matter how brilliant. The apostolic question is somewhat more complicated since evangelization depends, in part, for its means and vocabulary upon the milieu in which it works. The cultural question is, naturally, the most complex of all. On the level of speculative theology, the Church's life is continually—if slowly and rather irregularly—being affected by the philosophical, theological and scientific thoughts and moods around her. Here is where exploration is possible and necessary. What is the real meaning for the Church of Neo-orthodoxy and of this entire swift, spiritually contradictory age which has formed it?

Perhaps Tillich himself has already supplied one of the major keys for this exploration. It would not be, one supposes, out of the usual order of things. In a memorable passage he has conceived of the Protestant thing as a spirit, ever restless, ever ready to sacrifice unity, tranquillity and substance in order to push on ahead to discover new and unknown realms at the "boundary situations" of human existence. In a retrospective glance, he assigns the attempt to "preserve" the "substance" of Christianity to the Church.

In doing so, he has, I think, at last *exactly* stated the final—and perhaps complimentary—distinction between the Church which must keep this earthen vessel and all the Protestant moments which must try tirelessly to bear the Truth without it.

EASTER IN NOMINE

The Maundy Thursday shoppers,
Laving their feet in March's freshlets,
Complacently await
Eggrolling at Gethsemane.
Brains abud with bunny ears,
(Longer far than Simon Peter lopped),
And eyes channeled in a pink exhaustion
They stand atwaddle, apt for the word
To hippity-hop to Calvary.
Their ashen bodies,
Aneomoned in sack cerements,
Shall Hosannah the Resurrection morn
With such Handeled yawps of joy
That Salisbury's stained equinox
Shall seem a nimbler belief.

JOHN J. MCALEER.

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THE STAGE

THE TONE OF TIME

"I COULD not love thee, dear, so much, loved I not money more." The voice is singular—unalterably Shavian—and its timbre has been pungently registered in the entertainment Mr. Jerome Kilty calls "a comedy of letters." "Dear Liar" is, to be sure, at once rather more, and less: a long drifting, rueful, passionate, testy, down the chronicled alarms and excursions of the Irish tartar's *amitié particulière* with that patrician peasant he once imagined as able to "thread a needle with her toes at the first attempt as rapidly, as smoothly, as prettily, and with as much attention to spare for doing anything else at the same time as she can play an arpeggio." And Mr. Kilty, the Massachusetts Cantabrigian whom I remember gratefully in his other capacity as actor, shows a comparable liquid ease in his mastery of the dramatic montage. He has arranged the sudden starts, elisions, intimations of any relationship with a musical dexterity; he has contrived to evoke the very taste of intimacy. With Miss Katharine Cornell and Mr. Brian Aherne as *compères* of interpretation, "Dear Liar's" culture and civility become poignantly arresting.

Was it Shaw who thought that only on paper had humanity achieved anything unassailable in grace, in nobility and distinction, in a last loveliness? And did he, or more probably I, forget to add: *permanence?* For certainly it was that he conferred on the egregious Mrs. Pat—otherwise but one of the immortal shadows all players dissolve into, however much she might retort that permanence was damned little in return for the lot he *never* gave. Stella Campbell—the matronly *Mrs. Patrick* was a relic of eighteenth century manners, like so much of the lady herself—sails through the reefs of Edwardian anecdote with streamers flying and a shoal of fools for tenders. Indeed it was customary, I believe, to describe her in the briny imagery of wartime maneuvers at sea; and she heaves into our present view as one of those creatures inadmissible in vanity, irresponsible in sensibility, irresistible in gusto—not for nothing half-Irish, half-Italian: primed, too, with that pagan knowledge that pleasure is his alone who wields the power. (How gratifying, Shaw acidly remarked at one point, to enjoy the reputation of a goddess without ever having to *do* anything to justify it!—yet the type had a permanent fascination for him: the exquisitely meddling Hesione Hushabye in "Heartbreak House" is the last gleam of its allure.) Her end was mean and desolate—she went down, who has said, like a frigate firing on the very tugs that would salvage her—but she does not trouble the imagination for nothing. Privately, I have always though The Lady quite indispensable—have cherished, indeed, as the supreme rebuke to all self-constituted moralists, her passionate defense of personal inclination as a mode of freedom: she was prepared, you may recall, vehemently to allow every vagary of my liberty and your license, "provided they don't do it in the streets and frighten the horses."

The actualities of this duel in *armour propre*—discretions of kiss and tell—have never seemed to me the interesting or distinguished thing in it; only stupid people, as Mr. Stark Young once observed, think that in these matters there is for all instances literally a point at which it must be classified as one thing or the other. For some, among them a Southern gentleman of my acquaintance, all bourbon and virility, the whole may seem, in its tenor and stress, simply too far out. For Mr. Jerry Tallmer, in his excellent *Village Voice* notice, it stands as testimony to the paradox and cost of the imagination. Make it, then, what you will, for happily, Miss Cornell and Mr. Aherne do not labor the point. Their playing—superb in rhetoric, insinuating of presence, invincible as glamour—delights by its poise of parry, thrust, riposte, and by its eloquent effacement before the word. What it resumes is a chronicle pregnant with the very tone of time: of love's renewal, its flush and transfiguring grace; of the canker of egotism and the soiling spread of the self; finally, of that wound of affections misprised, deceiving, and our long melancholy drift down the irreversible passage of the world's way. *At the Billy Rose.*

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

PLEASE DON'T EAT THE CHILDREN

IT WAS with trepidation that I approached "Please Don't Eat the Daisies," the movie made from Jean Kerr's collection of light and witty articles about herself, her husband and their four young boisterous sons. I've known Walter and Jean Kerr for years, and I shuddered to think what the movies would do with them and their friends and Jean's breezy book. But my misgivings were unfounded. Joe Pasternak gave his film a good, tasteful production. Using Mrs. Kerr's book as a starting point, Isobel Lennart wrote an amusing script about a newly-appointed drama critic on a New York daily, his peppy wife who enjoys going to first-nights with him—even if only to get away from the kids for an evening—and their four boys who are hellions in the best movie tradition without being obnoxious about it.

Under Charles Walter's well-paced direction, these roles are nicely handled by David Niven, as the pro-

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fessor-turned-drama critic and the harassed father; Doris Day, as the devoted wife and exasperated mother who loves her sons but is enjoying the new routine of theaters, cocktail parties and social events; and four lively youngsters who portray the hellions. Also helpful in displaying the family aspects of this group are Spring Byington, as Doris's mother, and Patsy Kelly, as the very efficient maid. And shining brightly in the cast, although not as part of the family unit, is Janis Paige, as a flashy actress who soundly slaps David's face, during a crowded luncheon at Sardi's, in payment for an uncomplimentary review, and then later makes quite a play for David—even though he insists he's not available.

Since Jean Kerr's book didn't have a plot, Isobel Lennart had to invent one; and it turns out to be a rather thin though congenial bundle of complications during which David runs from Janis, struggles in spite of friends and practically everyone else to maintain his integrity as a drama critic, and works hard to convince his wife and kids that they are foremost in his affections. The script uses a few of Jean's wisecracks and has a lot of snappy Lennart repartee, but it muffs the point of the title. Visually the picture is a delight, with both Doris Day and David Niven looking right in the roles and acting as if they were having a good time in spite of everything that happens to them in city and suburbia. "Please Don't Eat the Daisies" may be fluff, but it's very pleasant, digestible fluff.

BECAUSE the first half-hour of "Wake Me When It's Over" is so hilarious, I had great expectations for this comedy that tries to be a combination of "Mr. Roberts" and "The Teahouse of the August Moon." It starts amiably with Dick Shawn, as a poor shnook who's always granting favors that backfire, being yanked back into the Air Force in 1953 and sent to an obscure Japanese island in the Pacific, and it seems to have the makings of a first-rate service comedy. Assisting bumbling Dick in the fun are Ernie Kovacs as the captain of the forgotten camp, where morale is practically nil; Jack Warden as the bright doctor who just doesn't care any more; Nobu McCarthy as the very attractive Japanese girl who is charmed by Dick; Margo Moore as a WAF lieutenant who is sent to the island and who is attracted to irresponsible Kovacs but wants to make him over completely; and a lot of other actors as servicemen, Japanese, guests and visiting Congressmen.

All this visiting comes about when Dick gets the bright idea to build a spa next to a spring whose waters he palms off as therapeutic. They're not, but with the help of Jack Warden he tricks another doctor into believing they are. And when American know-how gets going, there's no stopping it. The spa is a great success, visitors come from everywhere, and the picture gets out of hand. Richard Breen's script is funny; but once the joke is started, it's finished—or should be. And Producer-director Mervyn LeRoy didn't know where to stop: the joke is overdone and the production is far too elegant; and while the point is well-made about lifting the morale of both Americans and Japanese, the viewer is likely to doze before "Wake Me When It's Over" is over.

ALTHOUGH I don't agree with critics who insist that the Golden Age of cinema ended when movies started to talk, a film like "When Comedy Was King" certainly strengthens their argument. Robert Youngson has collected a lot of clips from silent comedies and some complete two-reelers and has strung them together as a panorama of how wonderful the silent screen with its sight gags really was. Whether or not you like slapstick chases and pie throwing and comic inventions, I defy you not to laugh at this potpourri of old greats like Chaplin, Keaton, Turpin, Langdon, Pollard, and all the rest who came up with superb comedy without uttering a word. They're all there: the Keystone Cops, the Sennett Bathing Girls, the whole pie-in-the-face and banana-peel school. The only trouble with the picture is that Producer Youngson couldn't resist writing a narration to explain the jokes and the actors. The sight gag tells itself and the actor's failings as a man have nothing to do with his obvious greatness as a comedian. But even the unnecessary narrator can't ruin these visual gems. Shut your ears and keep your eyes open.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"CATHOLICS AS A MINORITY"

Mattapan, Mass.

TO THE EDITORS: There is no question that Father R. L. Bruckberger is one of the finest commentators on America since Tocqueville. But as an American who happens to be a Catholic, and whose stake in democracy is founded upon the principle of self-determination, I cannot accept the advice which he has so lucidly and charitably offered to the Catholic citizens of this country ["American Catholics as a Minority," March 18].

In fact, it seems to me, Father Bruckberger's conclusions do not necessarily follow from the premises he has chosen to establish. For instance, isn't it obvious that the position of the Church in pre-Revolutionary France was an *a priori* position? But there is no similar condition of the Church in America today, and the Constitution historically guarantees (with the blessing and approbation of Catholics themselves) that

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a similar condition shall not arise. Also, it does not follow that the Church in America must necessarily be doomed with the various forms of "suspicion" it inherited in France after the Revolution. Otherwise, you simply deny the possibility of historical evolvement. It is no particular merit of insight to admit that any "suspicion" of the Church in America is due either to some deficiency in understanding (lack of dialogue) or, fortunately or unfortunately as the case may be, to the Church as a highly recognizable *identity* in a pluralistic society.

But regardless of these more or less academic distinctions, Father Bruckberger's advice to American Catholics ["I consider it very childish . . . to complain of never having had a Catholic President. They are fortunate."] is tantamount to advocating their surrender as responsible citizens in a free society. It all comes down, I think, to the majority-minority ambivalence to be found in any democratic form of government. But as Tocqueville has pointed out, "If ever the free institutions of America are destroyed, that event may be attributed to the omnipotence of the majority. . . ." So there is no particular virtue in laying low, or in playing possum, while the events of history pass us by. It is not a question of the minority wishing to become the majority, but of the right of the individual to the full exercise of his citizenship, and to that degree of realization which his own capabilities and the esteem of his countrymen may freely provide.

THOMAS P. MCDONNELL.

BOOKS

The Redemptive Tradition of Southern Rural Life

THE VIOLENT BEAR IT AWAY. By *Flannery O'Connor.* *Farrar, Straus and Cudahy.* $3.75.

By JAMES GREENE

IN HER NEW novel, Flannery O'Connor strikes again with ear-tingling impact a note rung in several of her short stories—the strong unflinching redemptive tradition of Southern rural life. There is something in that tradition that fascinates Miss O'Connor and here, in the generous space of a novel, she has opportunity to play upon that peculiarity the special gifts for insight, irony, and ordered nuance that make her beyond question one of the country's most interesting creative talents.

And, as in some of her shorter pieces, Miss O'Connor chooses for her main characters an old man and a boy—Mason Tarwater and his nephew Francis Marion Tarwater—who live together on a remote, decrepit farm in backwoods Georgia. The old man considers himself a prophet—at one with the great names of the Old Testament—and he knows, from the wisdom within him, that God has marked the boy too as "His elect servant." Old Tarwater's basic strategy is to keep the boy from any formal schooling so that "while other children his age were cutting out paper pumpkins under the direction of a woman, he was left free for the pursuit of wisdom."

Contending for the mind and spirit of the boy is another uncle, a schoolteacher interested, to the horror of the elder Tarwater, in the psychological sources of his vision. From this hissing confrontation of the old man's searing faith and the cool secularism of the schoolteacher, Miss O'Connor conjures up the extremes of a universal dilemma: in a world made habitable only by action, man disputes with himself the reasons and ends for action. And so, in the text from Matthew which gives this book its title, "from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and violent bear it away."

Not until the old man dies does the boy finally hear and heed the Lord's command to march into the city to inform the children of God of the terrible speed of mercy.

Miss O'Connor's style and her concerns remind one of the best in French Catholic writing; yet she has found in her own native Georgia the sources and materials that mark her as uniquely American. The characters cling close to the soil and to the sources of their faith—to biblical verities and the high, overweening causes of righteousness. In that spare blue-denimed backwater of American life Miss O'Connor's prophets gird for Armageddon despite the bland insolent thoughtlessness of the living. "The world," the elder Tarwater informs his successor, "was made for the dead . . . there's a million times more dead than living and the dead are dead a million times longer than the living are alive."

With a craftsman's sure eye, Miss O'Connor leavens the headlong sincerity of the Tarwaters with delightful serio-comic scenes themselves biblical in simplicity and tone. The old man's visit to the schoolteacher demanding the right to baptize the latter's idiot child poises the book's weighty theme on a fragile support of humor that bends but never collapses into laughter. A conversation with a supernatural stranger at the graveside of his dead uncle brings out the uncertainty the boy feels in his new role with broad strokes of narrative color and swirls of comic asides. And finally the bare-faced fraudulence of a revival reminds one of Mark Twain's great scenes with the Duke and the Dauphin. The revival is held by an evangelist family—father and mother and small girl of twelve—and Miss O'Connor gives us the details of the scene with a jumble of compassion, humor and insight that is as difficult to unsnarl as any experience in life. By having her secularist nephew as an eavesdropper on the scene, Miss O'Connor challenges

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her range of insight to the full. It is not found wanting.

Yet, while she gives all the characters in this tale a full range of human emotion, the author's eye is pinned most steadily on the elder Tarwater. If he is not truly a prophet he is carved from the same implacable stone as the prophets of old. His contempt for the spangles and baubles which make up life, his rage against the doubters of his vision, and his serene conviction that his nephew is meant by the Lord to succeed him give the reader an unforgettable glimpse of the committed soul. Tarwater fortells his death, purchases a new suit to die in and then wears it patiently for twenty years. He cannot understand the scoffers to whom twenty years could serve to obliterate the vision of his death—twenty years are simply an afternoon to the soul swimming in eternity.

After finishing this book one is not sure whether one would rather have Miss O'Connor continue her fascinating tales of Southern rural life or train her awesome powers on equally deserving aspects of our national life. Either way our national literature and consciousness are sure to be enriched, as by this new product of a superb writer still expanding in her powers.

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The Burden of Absolute Commitment

BERNANOS: His Political Thought and Prophecy. By Thomas Molnar. Sheed and Ward. $3.95.

By PHILIP DEASY

"I BELONG with all my being, with all my fibres, to an old sacerdotal civilization, to a civilization of peasants and soldiers . . . ," Georges Bernanos wrote in 1947, a year before his death. The countless thousands who have enjoyed the deeply moving experience of reading *The Diary of a Country Priest* will understand that impassioned cry as they will also accept Mr. Molnar's encomium of Bernanos, the novelist, as "a Balzac of the sacerdotal world."

Aware of this, and on the tried pedagogical principle of proceeding from the known to the unknown, Mr. Molnar, who is Professor of French and World Literature at Brooklyn College, formally introduces his study of Bernanos' political thought and prophecy with a discerning discussion of the Bernanos novels.

His point, amply and convincingly made, is that it is in these novels that Bernanos' view of the world is most transparent and that the same artistic intuition that penetrated so profoundly into the most complicated and sophisticated forms of evil in his fictional characters was of equal power in his discerning of men's natures, motives, hypocrisies, compromises and evasions in the actual twentieth century world of politics and technology.

In the domain of Bernanos' political philosophy itself it was perhaps inevitable that many pages of Mr. Molnar's study would have to be concerned with the question of whether Bernanos was a man of the Right or of the Left. This, not so much because it is in any way essential to label a man so single of eye and of such uncompromising integrity as Bernanos, but because men of both sides, particularly each side's extremists, have claimed him for their own.

Mr. Molnar's judgment is that if "Bernanos belongs to the traditional Right by his royalism, his preference for a hierarchically organized society, his adherence to the principle of authority and his contempt for democracy, he reacted in the manner of a leftist to the Franquist enterprise, to Munich, to Vichy and Pétain. If, with his insistence on social justice and charity and on the duty of the Church towards the victims of capitalism, he came close to the Christian Socialists whom he otherwise rejected, he did not indulge in sentimentalism concerning 'the revolution from below': he had only scorn for the progressive intellectuals, Catholic or Voltairean, who believed in the special virtues of the lower classes and in the inherent humanism of the proletariat."

The foregoing passage also indicates the main areas of Bernanos' religious, political and intellectual activities discussed in this book: Bernanos' early days in the *Action Française* to his leaving the movement in 1920; his stay in Majorca where he experienced directly the horrors and scandals of the Spanish Civil War, out of which came one of his greatest polemical pieces, *Les Grands Cimitières sous la lune;* his later remarkably perceptive and prophetic analyses of the Munich agreement and of France's tragic Vichy government years, and his final disillusionment with the *Resistance* and de Gaulle's post-World War II government.

If there is one man who serves in all these years as antagonist to Bernano's protagonist role, it is the calculating figure of Charles Maurras, founder of the *Action Française,* revealed in these pages almost as completely as Bernanos himself, from the time of the youthful Bernanos' first participation in the movement to the time, long after, when seeing in the France of Vichy the incarnation of Maurras' soul, Bernanos wrote, "The France of Maurras is as hollow, as vacuous as his Catholicism deprived of Christ, as his concept of Catholic order deprived of grace." All the

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momentous events of Europe's immediate past are to be found, therefore, in Mr. Molnar's *Bernanos,* absorbingly described and analyzed with great clarity and wide-ranging intelligence, and in a style of refreshing limpidity and directness. *Bernanos* is, in the best sense of the word, an interesting book, the kind that the intelligent general reader will revel in.

This is not to deny, however, that some of the later Bernanos pronunciamentos will not give the same reader pause. "Every thinking man has understood that America and Russia wage an economic rather than an ideological battle . . . Russia strives more and more to create a type of worker as productive as that of Detroit. And the unionized worker of Detroit, or the farmworker of America's large co-operatives is not so different from the Stalingrad worker or the peasant of the kolkhoze." "Every day brings us new proof that the age of ideologies is long passed, in New York as well as in Moscow or in London. We see the British imperial democracy, the American plutocratic democracy, and the Marxist Empire walk, if not hand in hand, at least towards the same goal . . . that is, towards maintaining a system inside which they all have acquired wealth and power." It is another striking merit of Mr. Molnar's achievement that one can sympathize, in the literal meaning of "feeling with," can understand how a man of Bernanos' French Catholic Christian temperament and outlook can hold such views, apart from whatever one might further say of these statements as objective ones of fact.

There must also be some demmurrers about the way Mr. Molnar concludes his study, and in the evidence he gives that he has not entirely overcome the temptation of overstating his case. On one page he rightly notes that as a Christian Bernanos "knew that perfection is not of this world, and that for human beings to claim it is the surest sign of beastliness and Mammon worship," but a few pages later he is presenting a "final proof of Bernanos' perfect grasp of the modern world—and of his flawless Christianity . . ." Who, it must be asked, has a perfect grasp of anything so complex as our modern world, and whose Christianity, in this same imperfect world, including its imperfect theologians, can be justly be called flawless?

And as Mr. Molnar of course knows, there are knowledgeable Christians of good will with an intellectual status considerably above that of "imbeciles," a favorite Bernanos epithet, who have seriously questioned the Bernanos-Guardini (Father Guardini's *The End of the Modern World* is summarized on two pages of Mr. Molnar's concluding chapter) grasp of the twentieth century world, men, moreover, who appreciate and accept the Bernanos distinction between hope as "despair overcome," and optimism as the shallow sentimentality of "cowards and imbeciles."

"The burden of absolute commitment is heavy on a man's life." Indeed it is. That is why the contemplation of the profoundly committed man Mr. Molnar presents to us in this engrossing, felicitously written study is at once a shattering and an immensely rewarding spiritual experi nce.

Creative Editing

I AM MY BROTHER. By John Lehmann. Reynal. $5.

By MAX COSMAN

I AM My Brother is a worthy successor to *The Whispering Gallery*. Informed, modulated, scrupulously fair, as if it were another editorial introduction, but on a Gargantuan scale of course, it advances the author's autobiographic record to cover the years of the late world conflict and to bear witness, concurrently, to "a crucial moment in the spiritual history" of his countrymen.

After a nostalgic look-back at Mr. Lehmann's pre-war experiences in Austria and along the course of the Danube, our volume gets on with its account of him as poet and impresario, that is, as creative writer himself yet celebrator of the creative efforts of others, and in a period at that in which the necessary publication apparatus was subject to repeated shock.

That Mr. Lehmann nevertheless became a major focus for written expression in his own country, and, by fraternal extension, in a number of others, and that his literary organs, *Penguin New Writing* and *New Writing and Daylight,* grew with him was not accidental, given the goal he had set himself. "As so often before in my life," goes one of his essentially selfless comments, "as the war went on I began to be obscurely aware of forms I believed poetry, novels, art, should take to respond to the mood, the undefined spiritual impulses of the time; forms I imagined I could almost seize from the inchoate mists, but not quite, and so must find poets and artists to create."

Find them he did—sometimes with the aid of a competitor like Cyril Connolly, but more often without. Looked at from the vantage point of the present, the men and women he secured as contributors to his desired forms of art make up a roster of distinguished writers. There are those three—Auden, Isherwood, Spender—that one tends to associate in a special group, even though the first two went off early to America.

Incidentally, Mr. Lehmann raises a reasoned defense against the canard that they ran away in the face of the enemy. He points out, what is easily substantiated, that they left England long before the invasion of Poland or even of Czechoslovakia, "that they had taken out papers for American citizenship but had nevertheless registered with the British Embassy in Washington and been told to stay put for the time being."

Then, of course, there is the main body of celebrities: Elizabeth Bowen, the Sitwells, Plomer, Sansom, Green, Warner, Day Lewis, MacNeice, Stonier, Rosamond Lehmann, Durrell, Lee, Allen, Graves, Pritchett, Lorca, Silone, Koestler, Giono, Sartre, and not to finish the list, those arrested much too soon

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by fell sergeant death—poor Virginia Woolf embracing him, Orwell fighting him, and Dylan Thomas helpless before him.

Vignettes abound. If you have any curiosity about how a great hostess or creator of a salon operates, you will have it satisfied by Mr. Lehmann's presentation of Ladies Colefax and Cunard. If you care for a turn in a pub during a black-out, or for a comment from someone in the armed services, Mr. Lehmann will again oblige you. For an example of spiritual courage there is the sketch of Edith Sitwell reading on in the hall of the Churchill Club, "Still falls the Rain / Still falls the blood from the Starved Man's wounded Side / He bears in His Heart all wounds," even as a doodle-bug, the adversary's V-weapon, rattles terrifyingly overhead.

Mr. Lehmann, to be sure, is capable of more than reminiscence. He shows this when he takes up a subject like the writer's place in society. What he has to say, based as it is on a deep immersion in the creative and destructive elements of our time, has a pertinence fraught with poignance. "The supreme lesson of the past seven years, if one has been in the thick of it in one way or another," he tells us, "is that the most difficult, and at the same time most important thing for a writer or artist is to maintain integrity as an artist and to make no concessions where truth is at stake."

Though the conclusion is pretty close to one Graham Greene once reached in a public exchange of views with V. S. Pritchett and Elizabeth Bowen, it is not uncharacteristic of Mr. Lehmann to arrive at it too. It was inherent in the loss of that *rentier*-guilt leftism which brought about early works of his like *Prometheus and the Bolsheviks* and *New Writing in England;* it has been implicit in the labors of which *The London Magazine* is the crown, that have since filled his knowledgeable years and justify us now in calling him England's dean of creative editors.

REVIEWERS

James Greene, a frequent contributor, is European editor of *Business International*.

Philip Deasy is a member of the English faculty at St. Peter's College, New Jersey.

Max Cosman is a frequent contributor to a number of American critical and scholarly journals.

ART

The Golden Eye of Monet

ONE OF the many delights to be experienced at a viewing of the splendid exhibition called *Claude Monet, Seasons and Moments* now at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (March 9-May 15) and later to be at the Los Angeles County Museum (June 14-August 7) is one that may be considered superfluous. It is the delight of witnessing the triumph of a stubborn personality. In the often quoted words of Cézanne: "Monet is only an eye, but what an eye!" Seeing the extraordinary results of that vision in painting seems to uncover the character of an intense, narrow and perhaps essentially prosaic artist who, through sheer force of will, burst through the bounds of a limited, preconceived idea of the supremacy of mere vision to achieve overwhelming lyrical masterpieces. It is enough to make one believe that, given a superior degree of talent, sheer integrity and hard work will perforce create great art.

Mr. William Seitz, who assembled this exhibition and also wrote a fine critical appraisal of Monet's landscapes for the catalogue, deserves enthusiastic acclaim for both ventures. The exhibition, by limiting the Monet paintings almost exclusively to landscapes, emphasizes the fact that landscapes are the heart of the work of this long-lived and prolific painter; furthermore, this limitation makes it possible to

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illustrate the method and practice of Monet's painting by giving generous examples of all his important "series" of paintings. These series—paintings of the same scene at different "seasons and moments" —display more eloquently than any account of them could hope to suggest that intense, narrow and even fanatic idea of art that is peculiarly Monet's and that in the end (in my opinion it is mostly near the end) utterly vindicates him by flowering in a perfection that is so complete as to seem effortless.

It must at once be said that if Monet's idea was limited, it was by no means banal; it was after all sufficient to nourish a career that stretches from the 1850's and the period when Courbet's realism was at its height to 1926 when Cubism had passed its peak. The idea was essentially to capture the instant's envelope of light and color, the atmosphere of a moment in nature.

Monet was certainly a nature-lover, but it was the atmosphere much more than the forms of nature that mattered to him, and buildings or haystacks (drowned in atmosphere) were as appealing to him for points of departure as natural objects such as trees, rocks, flowers and water of all kinds. In my opinion, however, it was only when his obsession with light and atmosphere was joined with natural, growing and liquid forms in nature that his genius achieved that coherence, that inevitability that, God knows, he indomitably sought. Even when he was over eighty and under the terribile threat of losing his eyesight entirely (he had cataracts) he continued to work with passionate absorption on the *Water Lilies* and on other paintings of the luxuriant beauties of his famous water-garden at Giverny.

The first major series (these subjects overlap in time) were the *Haystacks,* and they illustrate both the intensity of Monet's absorption in rendering the nuances of "moments" of light and color and, I believe, the failure to fuse the represented objects with that atmosphere. Mr. Seitz quotes Kandinsky's remarks on seeing a Monet *Haystack*: "the object was discredited as an indispensable element of the picture." I think this is perfectly true of all the *Haystacks* and I would say it even of the Rouen Cathedral series and of some of the London and Venice series. But, entirely unlike Kandinsky or Mr. Seitz, I would say this is precisely what is wrong with these pictures; unlike maybe everyone else I *do* feel there is something wrong. The object is both very much *there* and discredited. In the *Water Lilies,* in most of the Poplars, in one of the Japanese Footbridge paintings (the buoyantly green one, where the object-bridge is smothered in greenery) in the *Wisteria* and in all the *Morning on the Seine* series—in all these the object is used, it is not discredited; it is perfectly fused with the envelope of light and atmosphere at an "instant" of penetration. It seems as if man-made objects resisted that fusion with atmosphere that was Monet's great desire to achieve.

In a funny, irascible and enthusiastic book called *Claude Monet: The Water Lilies,* Georges Clemenceau, "the Tiger" of France, who was also a close friend of the painter, says: "Monet . . . after having created his style developed it in a continuous progress to the prodigy of *The Water Lilies.*" This may appear to be a pretty rough and ready summary of a great career, but I cannot help thinking it is true. If it does not describe the exhausting, meticulous almost Herculean process by which Monet reached perfection, nor his victories along the way, at least it forcibly points up the fact that the works of his old age were, amazingly, his greatest achievement. In the large triptych of *The Water Lilies* the color and fragrance of a watery light blooms on the canvas where the scattered blossoms of the lilies seem on the point of dissolving in the delicious atmosphere. It is wonderful. BETTY KAUFMAN.

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